

Unapproved

**Town of Essex
Conservation Commission**

**MINUTES Regular Meeting
Thursday, April 12, 7:30 p.m.
Essex Town Hall**

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on April 12, 2012 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall. Members in attendance were Kay Tucker, Chair, Doug Demarest, MaryAnn Pleva, Rich Lovelace, Pam Bernardini, Jeff Lovelace, Susan Malan, alternate and Ron Skinner, alternate. Also in attendance, Stella Beaudoin, Recording Secretary.

Ms. Tucker called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

Ms. Malan has been appointed as a full member, however she has not yet been sworn in. Ms. Malan and Mr. Skinner participated in the meeting, however they did not participate in the vote.

Review and approve March 8' 2012 meeting minutes

The following corrections were made:

- Page 2 under Discussion: "Ms Tucker noted that she would prefer that a portion of the tree remain intact." To read: *"Ms Tucker noted that she would prefer that we seek professional help to save the standing intact tree."*
- Page 3 under Expenditures: To read: *"The proposed start date is mid June 2012."*
- Page 4: "Ms Tucker commented that the Bushy Hill Preserve *brochures* and the Viney Hill Brook Preserve *need to be updated*".
- Page 5 under New Business: To read: "There will be an easement coming down to Viney Hill Brook Preserve."
- Page 5 under New Business: To read: *"The town of Essex was deeded 13 acres of land as part of the Essex Glen approved proposal."*

Motion made by Doug Demarest to approve the March 8, 2012 Minutes as amended.

Motion seconded by Maryann Pleva and passed unanimously.

Ms. Malan commented on a portion of the Minutes which referenced an email from an unknown person. Ms. Malan noted that from an FOI perspective the detail of the Minutes are not necessary and she suggested that moving forward some of the detail may be omitted. A brief discussion ensued.

Ms. Pleva stated that the extent of the detailed information in the Minutes may be questioned. Ms. Tucker stated that she extrapolated from those Minutes the fact that there was a meeting and tried to explain to the commissioners that a public hearing was to be conducted on a zone change which does impact the Conservation Commission as the property abutted Viney Hill Brook Park.

Old Business

a) Maps

Doug Demarest volunteered to pursue the task of merging the entire Town of Essex inventory of all of the easements on to one map. In the past, the Conservation Commission hired Wendy Arnold to update the maps, also working with Applied Geographics. Joe Budrow, Essex ZEO/WEO had stated that he would handle the update of the easements onto the maps however Mr. Budrow has not had the opportunity to do so.

It was noted that the overall GIS does not have the up-to-date conservation restrictions and easement information on it.

Maryann Pleva asked if we could hire Wendy Arnold to complete the project.

Susan Malan stated that if the easement information is in GIS, Margo from CRERPA may be able to complete this project. Ms. Malan will pursue with CRERPA.

Ms. Tucker stated that in 2002 the Town's attorney David Royston wrote a letter to the Selectman with regard to the approval of Stanley subdivision noting that the restrictions should be enforced by the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Lovelace and Ms. Tucker will schedule a meeting to decide on the photo to be utilized and the language for the Viney Hill Brook Park brochures.

Mr. Lovelace stated that he wanted to contact Dave Caroline to inquire if the town crew could repair the Boardwalk drainage problem.

b) Trail Reports

Canfield Meadow Woods – Maryann Pleva and Pam Bernardini walked the trails to view the fire damage. Ms. Bernardini stated that it appeared that no trees had been damaged and the extent of the fire was limited to the leaves.

Ms. Tucker was in touch with Keith Nolan, Essex fire marshal and Mr. Nolan noted that there were so many dried leaves on the ground, it took thirty fire fighters several hours to extinguish the blaze. Fire fighters from Old Saybrook and Deep River were called in to assist. Ms. Tucker stated that she will write a letter to the volunteer fire department to thank them for their work.

Viney Hill Brook Park

Rich Helmecki and Kay Tucker walked Viney Hill Brook Preserve. They purchased a new mailbox to replace one that has been missing from its post. However, they were able to locate the old mailbox which was intact and they secured it in the same location.

Mr. Helmecki noted that the area from Boardwalk to the red trails is still very muddy and wet. Mr. Helmecki suggested the construction of a bog bridge.

Ms. Tucker noted that the water level was low in the Quarry pond and there was a good amount of debris in the water to include large wads of a Styrofoam substance, a large metal object, rusted buckets, tires, etc. It was suggested that the Boy Scouts might wish to participate in the

clean-up project. Doug Demarest volunteered to locate a local Troop leader and request assistance with the clean up of the pond and the surrounding area.

Bushy Hill Park

Jeff Lovelace volunteered to contact Dave Caroline regarding the installation of pipes while the area is still dry.

Mr. Helmecki noted that he repaired the bird box that was in the field and while he was there he ran into Al Macgregor who was clearing the trees belonging to the Land Trust. Mr. Helmecki noted that the area around the two picnic tables was mowed and Mr. Helmecki thinks Al Macgregor was responsible for the mowing. Ms. Tucker stated that she will send a payment for the use of the equipment.

Mr. Helmecki indicated that there are three slats on the foot bridge that are again broken. Mr. Helmecki has four boards left which he will use for replacement on the foot bridge. Ms. Tucker volunteered to help.

Conservation Easement Inventory Project

Ms. Tucker stated that there are many easements on which the Conservation Commission should be checking to determine if they are properly used and maintained and to be sure the signage is intact. Ms. Tucker received a resume from a perspective intern who will be graduating from UCONN with a degree in natural resources management with concentration in forestry and wildlife management. Ms. Tucker stated that she would like to hire an intern and turn over the maps and review the trails.

Ms. Malan noted that this intern position should be posted. Ms Tucker indicated that she will look into the necessity of posting this position.

Ms Malan stated that she would like to see if CRERPA would be willing to take this project on.

It was noted that in the job description the requirements should include: visiting each of the conservation easements; easement maintenance; installation of the signage; completion of a check list of completed tasks;

Ms. Malan stated that commission members could take on this project and Mr. Lovelace suggested that each member take ten pieces of property and go out and tag the easements.

Ms. Tucker reminded commissioners that this project must be completed before the end of the fiscal year. Ms. Tucker asked members to email her with which easements they decided to work on. There was a brief discussion on the necessity of notifying the property owners whose property abuts the easements that the commissioners will be in the area conducting research.

Schedule Autumn Olive Removal & Clean up, Viney Hill Brook Park

Ms. Tucker stated that several years ago members cleaned and removed the invasives from Viney Hill Brook Preserve, however the invasives are coming back up again. Members scheduled a clean up on April 22, 2012 at 4:00 a.m. Ms. Tucker, Mr. Helmecki and Mr. Demarest at the site at 4:00 p.m. Mr. Skinner and Ms. Bernardini stated that they may available

at that time. Ms. Tucker reminded those who are attending to bring chainsaws. Mr. Helmecki will bring the Round Up.

c) Other

- The Conservation Commission has been requested to appoint a liaison to the IWWC. Jeff Lovelace volunteered to fill the 3-year term position. Ms. Tucker will write a letter to the Selectmen nominating Mr. Lovelace for the position.

Motion made by Maryann Pleva to appoint Jeff Lovelace to serve as the IWWC liaison.

Motion seconded by Pam Bernardini and passed unanimously.

- Ms. Tucker noted that in 2008 the sum of \$500 was given to the Essex Land Trust for the construction of a kiosk. Al Macgregor and Dana Hill will be making the kiosk. Ron Skinner volunteered to work with Al Macgregor and Dana Hill.
- A \$350 deposit was sent by the Commission for the phragmite control.
- A payment of \$60 was made to Shirley Malcarne for completion of the 2012 inventory.
- Mr. Helmecki purchased materials in the amount of \$26.75.

Motion made by Doug Demarest to pay Shirley Malcarne \$60 for her services and reimburse Rich Helmecki \$26.75 for materials.

Motion seconded by Pam Bernardini and passed unanimously.

- Ms. Malan asked to be placed on the May 2012 Agenda for discussion of her proposal in conjunction with the Tulip Poplar tree.
- Ms. Pleva proposed a change of time for the regularly scheduled Conservation Commission to 7:00 p.m.
- Ms. Malan proposed a change the day of the regularly scheduled Conservation Commission meeting noting that the Planning Commission meets on the same evening.

Ms. Tucker stated her opposition to changing the day of the meeting.

Ms. Pleva suggested that the Conservation Commission meeting be conducted on the first Thursday of each month. Ms. Tucker asked to have information regarding the Essex meeting calendar available at the May 10, 2012 meeting.

IWWC Subdivision Site Walk – Preserve

Mr. Lovelace stated that he attended the IWWC site walk to review the River Sound Development subdivision proposal. There are six proposed lots on Ingham Hill Road and there

are 3 proposed subdivisions. One is situated in Old Saybrook, one is situated in Essex and one is situated in Westbrook. The center of the big preserve will be open space. The local residents on Ingham Hill Road are very concerned.

Correspondence

The Essex Planning Commission is in receipt of a subdivision application for the creation of six new house lots along Riverview Street and Foxboro Road in Essex. The Planning Commission has asked for input from the Conservation Commission on this proposal relative to its opinion on open space, parks and playgrounds. The public hearing will be conducted on April 17, 2012. Susan Malan suggested that a statement from the Conservation Commission be read into the record stating at that public hearing.

Ms. Tucker commented on this request which was placed in the Conservation Commission mailbox in the Town Hall. Ms. Tucker noted that she cannot get to the town hall during the day and often times time sensitive materials are overlooked. Ms. Tucker asked if a commissioner was able to access the town hall during the day to retrieve the contents of the commission's mailbox.

Motion made by Pam Bernardini to respond to the request from the Essex Planning Commission dated March 20, 2012 to read: "In response to your request for input from the Essex Conservation Commission which is dated March 20, 2012 regarding the Foxboro Point subdivision application, the Conservation Commission agrees with the plan as proposed and shown on *Map Drawing SDP-1 of the site development plan Foxboro Point Subdivision, 1 Foxboro Road (a.k.a. Foxboro Point) Property ID 16 012 and dated December 28, 2011*, the Essex Conservation Commission respectfully requests a 150-foot easement with public access to the CT River North Cove from Riverview Street and from Foxboro Road."

Motion seconded by Doug Demarest and passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Motion made by Jeff Lovelace to adjourn.

Motion seconded by Doug Demarest and passed unanimously.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Essex Conservation Commission adjourned at 9:37p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin
Recording Secretary

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Essex Conservation Commission will be conducted on May 10, 2012.

